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INFO RUCNCLS/ALL SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA COLLECTIVE
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RUEHAK/AMEMBASSY ANKARA 3668
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 1486
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 1353
RUEHIT/AMCONSUL ISTANBUL 1922
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RUCPDOG/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHDC
RHMFIUU/CDR USCENCOM MACDILL AFB FL
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC
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STATE FOR SCA/CEN, EEB
TREASURY FOR LANIER/BAKER

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SUBJECT: TURKMENISTAN'S SUPREME AUDIT CHAMBER: CHARGED
WITH THE BIG TASK OF ENSURING EFFICIENCY

11. (U) Sensitive but unclassified. Not for public Internet.

12. (SBU) SUMMARY: Turkmenistan's GAO-like Supreme Auditing Chamber was created in August 2007 to oversee use of the country's resources. A meeting on April 14 revealed that Chamber employees are interested in how their counterparts in other countries perform their jobs and are conducting online research on methods of using government resources effectively. The Chamber is utilizing Performance Auditing as a technique for reviewing draft laws and decrees, and seems to be genuinely committed to carrying out its job in a professional manner. The officials expressed interest in learning more about the General Accounting Office, which they identified as their most compatible counterpart. END SUMMARY.

PURPOSE AND TECHNIQUES OF THE CHAMBER

13. (SBU) Three officials from the Supreme Auditing Chamber told EmbOff during an April 14 meeting that the Chamber is charged with determining the most effective use of government resources and with effectively allocating investments and procurement through government controls. The officials added that the Chamber also focuses on effective government budgeting. The Supreme Auditing Chamber holds meetings with other government agencies, when needed, for the purpose of coordinating fund allocation. Turkmenistan's ministries also inform the Chamber of progress on projects.

14. (SBU) Chamber employees utilize an auditing instrument called Performance Auditing to review laws, executive orders, and decrees in the draft stage. The Chamber then produces recommendations for improvements. Through this process, the Chamber can judge whether public agencies are carrying out activities on an effective and efficient basis.

ORGANIZATION OF THE CHAMBER

15. (SBU) The Chamber is organized around three areas:

-- Legal enforcement, covering topics such as macroeconomic analysis, methodology of standards, investment projects, and normative legislation;
-- Natural resources, covering government income and expenditures, state debts, banking insurance, and property; and
-- International relations, supervising international agreements and international investment projects.

CHOOSING A MODEL THROUGH INDEPENDENT RESEARCH

16. (SBU) The Chamber officials told EmbOff that they are seeking to find out more about how other countries' auditing and oversight bodies operate. To that end, Chamber officials are researching international experience through the Internet, and are actively analyzing the experience of other countries -- especially former Soviet republics, as well as that of Norway. They will use this information to decide what kind of model will ensure most efficient use of Government of Turkmenistan resources.

ON THE QUESTION OF A VISIT FROM TREASURY...

17. (SBU) One of the officials who exhibited a good command of English -- and who admitted to having taken the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) -- asked if the General Accounting Office (GAO) would be a part of an upcoming Treasury Department delegation. He saw the GAO as the Chamber's most compatible counterpart in terms of auditing and oversight functions. Although he was not the person charged with leading the meeting, he was one of the more active of the three Turkmen participants.

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18. (SBU) COMMENT: These officials were of the guarded type, answering questions with the bare minimum of information. Clearly they were not at a decision-making level. The president tasked the Supreme Auditing Chamber with a big job: ensuring efficiency. And these officials appear to be committed to carrying out their assigned task. END COMMENT.
CURRAN